

## The English It Cleft

*Seminar paper from the year 2005 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Linguistics, grade: 1,7, Technical University of Braunschweig (Englisches Seminar), course: Introduction to Information Structure, language: English, abstract: From language to language, there are different alternatives in which a speaker can structure information. Information structure deals with the highlighting of pieces of information in sentences. Even though there are a variety of ways in which the same basic informational content can be conveyed, the preference for a particular way reveals how the speaker's semantic representation is transposed into syntactical data. Moreover, the speaker's choice for structuring information into a particular linguistic form shows the coherent way in which utterances are connected in sequences, revealing thus the importance of discourse. There are several syntactic devices that are able to encode the pragmatic information of a preferred alternative. One type of such devices used to mark information structure is cleft constructions. There are two major types of clefts: it-clefts and WH-clefts, also called pseudo-clefts. There has been claimed in the literature for a long time that cleft constructions are interchangeable. Clefts present a series of syntactic similarities, but they behave differently in discourse. The purpose of this paper is to prove that it-clefts and WH-clefts are not interchangeable. In doing so, data will be analyzed by comparing clefts as far as form, structure, and discourse functions are concerned, and eventually, in the light of given and known information, I will show the essential differences between them. Although the grammatical forms are in direct relation and determine to some degree the information structure in a cleft, apart from the syntactical level, of significant importance is the analysis of cleft constructions as integrated components of a discourse. One should take into account the natural flow of la*

*The volume Questions in Discourse - Vol. 2 Pragmatics collects original research on the role of questions in understanding text structure and discourse pragmatics. The in-depth studies discuss the effects of focus, questions and givenness in unalternative semantics, as well as the role of scalar particles, question-answer pairs and prosody from the perspective of Questions under Discussion. Two contributions compare the discourse-structuring potential of Questions under Discussion and rhetorical relations, whereas another adds a perspective from inquisitive semantics. Some contributions also look at understudied languages. Together, the contributions allow for a better understanding of question-related pragmatic and discourse-semantic phenomena, and they offer new perspectives on the structure of texts and discourses.*

*Aspects of the Grammar of Focus in English*

*Discourse Pragmatics and Cleft Sentences in English*

*A Novel*

*The syntax-pragmatics interface in second language acquisition*

*A Discourse Analysis of Cleft and Pseudo-cleft Constructions in American English*

This work, first published in 1979, was a doctoral dissertation submitted to the Department of Foreign Literatures and Linguistics of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on June 22nd 1973. The ostensible central topic of this essay is a construction which is generally known as the "pseudo-cleft" construction. This essay aims to provide an overall picture of the construction, and show why another treatment of it is necessary. This book will be of interest to those pursuing the topic of copular sentences.

The volume Questions in Discourse - Semantics contains an overview of the semantic analysis and discourse-structuring role of questions, together with in-depth contributions on individual aspects of question meanings and the function of implicit questions in discourse.

The Cleft

Cleft Structures

The do-cleft construction in English

Cleft and Pseudo-Cleft Constructions in English

A Role and Reference Grammar Analysis

**First published in 1991, this book examines the communicative properties of 'cleft' and 'pseudo-cleft' constructions in contemporary English. The book argues that these properties cannot be ignored in any attempt to provide an adequate grammatical description of the constructions. Furthermore, they provide a source of explanations for the patterns of stylistic variation displayed by clefts and pseudo-clefts. The book reports findings from a corpus-based study of clefts and pseudo-clefts in modern British English.**

**This monograph is the first large-scale corpus analysis of French il y a clefts. While most research on clefts focusses on the English 'prototypical' it-cleft and its equivalents across languages, this study examines the lesser-known il y a clefts - of both presentational-eventive and specificational type - and provides an in-depth analysis of their syntactic, semantic and discourse-functional properties. In addition to an extensive literature review and a comparison with Italian c'è clefts and with French c'est clefts, the strength of the study lies in the critical approach it develops to the common definition of clefts. Several commonly used criteria for clefts are applied to the corpus data, revealing that these criteria often lead to ambiguous results. The reasons for this ambiguity are explored, thus leading to a better understanding of what constitutes a cleft. In this sense, the analysis will be of interest to specialists of Romance and non-Romance clefts alike.**

It-clefts

The English Pseudo-cleft

Exhaustivity, Contrastivity, and the Semantics of Mandarin Cleft-Related Structures

The English Cleft Construction

Topics in the syntax and semantics of English cleft sentences

This book presents the first detailed and comprehensive study of information highlighting in advanced

learner language, echoing the increasing interest in questions of near-native competence in SLA research and contributing to the description of advanced interlanguages. It examines the production and comprehension of specific means of information highlighting in English by native speakers and German learners of English as a foreign language, presenting triangulated experimental and learner corpus data as corroborating evidence. The study focuses on learners' use of discourse-pragmatically motivated variations of the basic word order such as inversion, preposing, and it- and wh-clefts, an underexplored field in SLA research to date. The book also provides a critical re-assessment of the study of pragmatics within SLA. It has largely been neglected to date that L2 pragmatic knowledge includes more than the sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic abilities for understanding and performing speech acts. Thus, the book argues for an extension of the scope of inquiry in interlanguage pragmatics beyond the cross-cultural investigation of speech acts. It also discusses pedagogical implications for foreign language teaching and will be of interest to applied linguists and SLA researchers, language teachers and curriculum designers.

Clefting is a common birth defect, and it is one of the most fixable. This guide helps alleviate parents' fears by explaining what a cleft is and what can be done about it. Illustrations.

Some Semantic Rules in the Formal Description of English Pseudo-cleft Sentences

The Pseudo-Cleft Construction in English

Some Aspects of Cleft Sentences in English

Clefts and their Relatives

Spontaneous Spoken Language

***This text provides a unique and comprehensive approach to cleft assessment, treatment, and management, with new and revised content that will keep you at the cutting edge of cleft lip and palate treatment and therapies. Comprehensive coverage of every aspect of cleft palate and related disorders. Thorough coverage of the available literature on cleft lip and cleft palate includes both contemporary and historically significant studies, as well as low-incidence types of phenomena. The Birth of a Child with a Cleft introduction provides a detailed preview to the treatment of children with clefts, and offers useful suggestions for interacting with their parents. New artwork clearly demonstrates and enhances understanding of important clinical conditions and procedures.***

***Jim Miller and Regina Weinert investigate syntactic structure and the organization of discourse in spontaneous spoken language. Using data from English, German, and Russian, they develop a systematic analysis of spoken English and highlight properties that hold across languages. The authors argue that the differences in syntax and the construction of discourse between spontaneous speech and written language bear on various areas of linguistic theory, apart from having obvious implications for syntactic analysis. In particular, they bear on typology, Chomskyan theories of first language acquisition, and the perennial problem of language in education. In current typological practice written and spontaneous spoken texts are often compared; the authors show convincingly that typological research should compare like with like. The consequences for Chomskyan, and indeed all, theories of first language acquisition flow from the central fact that children acquire spoken language but learn written language.***

**Cleft Sentences**

**Questions in Discourse**

**Frequency, Forms and Functions of Cleft Constructions in Romance and Germanic**

**Cleft Sentences in Chinese and Their English Equivalents**

**Volume 1: Semantics**

**The English it-Cleft: A Constructional Account and a Diachronic Investigation** Walter de Gruyter

*Exhaustivity, Contrastivity, and the Semantics of Mandarin Cleft-related Structures* investigates the semantics of the cleft and cleft-related structures in Mandarin, which, over several decades, have presented analytical challenges for semantic theory. The goal of this book, in broad terms, is three-fold: (i) to figure out what clefting adds to the semantics of a sentence; (ii) to set apart the meaning and the discourse function of each type of cleft-related structure; and (iii) to provide a uniform analysis of Mandarin clefts and their related structures. More specifically, it addresses the following questions: (i) what is the semantics of Mandarin clefts? (ii) what do exhaustivity and contrastivity contribute to the meaning of clefts? (iii) what are the semantic (or pragmatic) factors that determine the variation of clefts, related structures, and canonical sentences? and (iv) cross-linguistically speaking, how do Mandarin shi...de cleft and its related structures differ from similar constructions such as English it-cleft, French c'est cleft, and German es-cleft? This book will be informative for linguists who are working on cleft constructions, focus sensitive structures cross-linguistically, and those interested in experimental semantics and pragmatics.

*Information Highlighting in Advanced Learner English*

*A Constructional Account and a Diachronic Investigation*

*The Pseudo-cleft Constructions in English*

*And Related Constructions in English and Danish*

*The English it-Cleft*

*The volume describes the frequency, the forms and the functions of different cleft construction types across two language families: the Romance languages (with discussion of Italian, French and Spanish data) and the Germanic languages (with focus on English, German, Swiss German and Danish).*

*This book examines the structure and function of the English it-cleft configuration from within the framework of construction grammar. It defends a straightforward extraposition-from-NP analysis (on which the cleft clause is a restrictive relative, modifying the initial it) and claims that all types of it-cleft involve nominal predication. Support for this analysis comes from three main areas: (a) the central role of definiteness in the creation of specificational meaning, (b) the existence and makeup of predicational (and proverbial) it-clefts, and (c) the early, historical it-cleft data. In addition, the book contains a sizeable diachronic component, drawing data from the Penn Parsed Corpora of Historical English and from the International Corpus of English - Great Britain. This*

*investigation informs and advances what is an otherwise simple account of the English it-cleft, explaining how and why the configuration has developed an assortment of peculiar, construction-specific properties over time.*

*The Analysis of Cleft and Pseudo-cleft Sentences in English  
Contrastive, Corpus-Based Studies*

*The Walnut Street Messenger 1922-1928 with Index*

*Topics in the Syntax and Semantics of English Cleft Sentences*

The phenomenon of clefts is beyond doubt a golden oldie. It has captivated linguists of different disciplines for decades. The fascination arises from the unique syntax of clefts in interaction with their pragmatic and semantic interpretation. Clefts structure sentences according to the information state of the constituents contained in them. They are special as they exhibit a rather uncommon syntactic form to achieve the separation of the prominent part, either focal or topical, from the background of the clause. Despite the long-lasting interest in clefts, linguists have not yet come to an agreement on many basic questions. The articles contained in this volume address these issues from new theoretical and empirical perspectives. Based on data from about 50 languages from all over the world, this volume presents new arguments for the proper derivation of clefts, and contributes to the ongoing debate on the information-structural impact of cleft structures. Theoretically, it combines modern syntactic theorizing with investigations at the interface between grammar and information-structure.

Cleft constructions have long presented an analytical challenge for syntactic theory. This monograph argues that clefts and related constructions cannot be analysed in a straightforwardly compositional manner. Instead, it proposes that the locality conditions on modification (for example by a restrictive relative clause) must be reformulated such that they account for the apparent compositionality of DP-internal modification whilst also permitting 'discontinuous' modification of the type which is independently needed for constructions such as relative clause extraposition. The empirical focus of the book is on clefts in English and Russian, which have a similar interpretation but considerably divergent syntactic structures. The author argues that, despite these syntactic differences, both types of cleft are mapped to their semantic interpretations in the same manner. This monograph will be essential reading for those working on cleft constructions and copular sentences more generally, and will be of interest to those working on the syntax-semantics interface.

The Complete Book of Information, Resources, and Hope

Syntax and Discourse

Comparison Between It-clefts and WH-Clefts: Similarities and Differences

Your Cleft-Affected Child

Cleft Palate Speech

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From Doris Lessing, "one of the most important writers of the past hundred years" (Times of London), comes a brilliant, darkly provocative alternative history of humankind's beginnings. In the last years of his life, a Roman senator retells the history of human creation and reveals the little-known story of the Clefts, an ancient community of women living in an Edenic coastal wilderness. The Clefts have neither need nor knowledge of men; childbirth is controlled through the cycles of the moon, and they bear only female children. But with the unheralded birth of a strange new child—a boy—the harmony of their community is suddenly thrown into jeopardy. In this fascinating and beguiling novel, Lessing confronts the themes that inspired much of her early writing: how men and women manage to live side by side in the world and how the troublesome particulars of gender affect every aspect of our existence.

Pragmatics

The Pseudo-cleft Construction in English

Non-prototypical Clefts in French

Index of the Periodical Dental Literature Published in the English Language

Clefts and Their Relatives